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FOR A/S FRAZER FROM CDA BROWN

E.O. 12958: DECLAS: 10/31/2017

TAGS: [MASS](#) [PREL](#) [MOPS](#) [MARR](#) [UV](#)

SUBJECT: Burkinabe Peacekeeping Forces in Darfur: Urgent Need
for USG to Provide Armored Personnel Carriers

Classified by Charge David Brown for reason 1.4 (d)

¶1. (C) AmEmbassy Ouagadougou wishes to flag for you the urgent issue of the U.S. purchase of 26 armored personnel carriers (APCs) for the Burkinabe battalions that we hope to have deployed to Darfur. Over many months, the ACOTA program has been working successfully to train and equip multiple Burkinabe battalions in the anticipation that they would be deployed to Darfur as early as December 2007. Although this December date will no longer be possible, we expect that - other than the APCs and other, less costly items - the first Burkinabe should be ready to deploy in the first quarter of 2008, with second and subsequent Burkinabe battalions rotating in after several months.

¶2. (C) However, despite appeals made in Ouagadougou by the Burkina Faso Government (GOBF) in early September and a P-3 Demarche sent out on September 26 (State 136068), we are unaware of other donors who may have stepped forward to make equipment donations for the Burkinabe. We and Burkinabe officials are not optimistic that any donors will step forward in the coming weeks.

¶3. (C) A high-level UN team currently plans to visit Burkina Faso in the November 26-December 2 timeframe to look at the status of GOBF pledges to the UN/AU peace-keeping operation in Darfur (UNAMID). AmEmbassy Ouagadougou has previously engaged in teleconferences with UN DPKO in New York, along with AF/RSA and USUN. During these calls, DPKO has made it clear that it would insist that troop-contributing countries (TCCs) strictly adhere to its force-protection equipment requirements - including APCs - despite the fact that these requirements, in some areas, were significantly more demanding than African Union requirements under which Burkina Faso originally made its pledge of troops.

¶4. (C) If the Burkinabe can not confirm, by the time of this high-level UN inspection, that 26 APCs and other equipment have been pledged by another country on its behalf, Burkina Faso will likely be dropped from the current TCC rotation, and postponed indefinitely as a TCC.

¶5. (C) Burkinabe Defense Minister Boly on October 25 and the Chief of Staff of the Burkinabe Armed Forces Traore on October 26 relayed their concerns to Charge about such an outcome. We are confident that President Compaore and/or Prime Minister Zongo will raise this issue during their meetings with the Deputy Secretary and you on November 13.

¶6. (C) A U.S. failure to come forth with the necessary funding to secure the APCs will likely prevent Burkina Faso from keeping its public pledges to provide peacekeepers to Darfur - such as made by Foreign Minister Bassole during his UNGA speech on October 2. Given President Compaore's personal commitment to peaceful mediation in many of the continent's conflicts, most notably in Cote d'Ivoire, Niger and Togo, a retreat on his Government's promises would be a serious loss of face for him - and a serious loss of credibility for the United States.

¶17. (C) The Burkinabe have been cooperative in allowing and supporting the JSOAD air detachment at the air force base at Ouagadougou's international airport. With the host government's blessing and support, JSOAD has been supporting plane movements in support of the USG's Trans-Sahelian counter-terrorism efforts.

¶18. (C) Burkina Faso was also recently elected to a two-year term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. We will be repeatedly calling on Burkina Faso to support our UNSC positions regarding Africa and the rest of the world. We have taken the Burkinabe down the aisle with our vision of helping it to send peacekeepers to Darfur; as we near completion of months of efforts to train and equip, now is not the time to abandon Burkina Faso.

¶19. (U) Ambassador Jeanine Jackson, who is currently away from Post, has approved this message.

BROWN